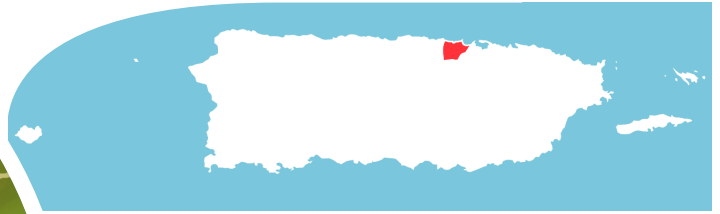


# Plains Coquí, or Coquí Llanero

*Eleutherodactylus juanariveroi*



Distribution ■

**Family:** Leptodactylidae  
**Order:** Anura

## Description

The plains coquí is the smallest frog species in Puerto Rico. Its size is approximately that of a dime. The average size in males is 0.58 inches, or 14.7 mm, while females average 0.62 inches, or 15.8 mm, in size. Their coloring varies from light brown to yellow. Its nostrils are prominent and the tip of its snout is slightly squared.

## Biological Information

### Reproduction

It is the species with the least reproductive capacity among Puerto Rican tree frogs. The plains coquí only produces one to five eggs per clutch. The coquí llanero only lays its eggs on bulltongue arrowhead (*Sagittaria lancifolia*) leaves.

### Habitat

Ferns, plants in the *Cyperus* genus, bulltongue arrowheads, creeper vines and graminous (grassy)

plants are usually in abundance in the wetlands in which the plains coquí are found. *Cyperus* plants are herbaceous plants that only grow in wetlands and marshes. The type of wetlands in which these plants grow are rare in Puerto Rico. Wildlife experts estimate a population of about 192 individuals per acre, but the population is not evenly distributed within the 615-acre (633 cuerdas) of the wetlands in which it is found.

### Diet

The plains coquí feeds mostly on small insects.

### Distribution

The plains coquí's geographical distribution is the most limited, out of all the coquí species in Puerto Rico. The only known population is adapted to survive in only one herbaceous freshwater wetland located in the former Sabana Seca Navy grounds, and in Toa Baja lands managed by the Puerto Rico Land Authority. The Sabana Seca wetland is located on the San Pedro Marsh, located in Toa Baja. This marsh is split into two parts: an estuarine wetland in the north, and a palustrine (freshwater) wetland in the south. The plains coquí inhabits all of the southern part of the marsh.

### Information About the Coquí's Call

This coquí's call has the highest frequency out of all of Puerto Rico's amphibian species. It oscillates between 7.38 and 8.28 kHz. Therefore, the coquí's calls can go unnoticed when paired with other noises and is hard to isolate. This species' call consists of a series of notes that can last between 4 to 21 seconds. Males begin calling after 4:30 PM, and significantly decrease their calls before midnight.

### Threats

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The main risk faced by this species is the way urban development has destroyed and modified its habitat. Depredation also poses a risk to the coquí llanero, especially in the drier edges of the wetland. The isolation in which this species lives makes it vulnerable to diseases and predation.

Other natural or anthropogenic factors affect this species' existence. Some of these factors are: climate change, hurricanes, polluted runoff from landfill leachate, soil and water pollution, herbicide use, dredging done on the canals along the wetland, and the reduction of their habitat due to construction projects.

There are also several indirect threats that can harm the coquí llanero. For instance, if climate change causes a rise in ocean levels, this can change the composition of the wetland, turning it from a freshwater system to a saltwater one. This would change the composition of the area's vegetation, which in turn would drastically alter the coquí's way of life and means of reproduction.

## Conservation Measures

The plains coquí was included in the federal list of endangered species in 2012. This action will bring to light this species' vulnerability. In that same year, the wetland in which the coquí lives was designated a critical habitat. This designation helps ensure that the biological and ecological factors of the wetland will not be destroyed or modified by projects with federal funding or permits.

The Endangered Species Act of 1973, as amended, prohibits the killing, harassing, trapping, purchasing or selling any species, as well as parts and products derived from the species.

## References

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## Additional Information

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